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Issue: May 20, 2022

World Health Organization pandemic treaty: A fresh push for vaccine passports, global surveillance, and more

The unelected international health agency is on the verge of being granted sweeping new powers.

By Tom Parker Posted 11:52 am

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Members of the World Health Organization (WHO) are days away from voting on an international pandemic treaty and amendments to the International Health Regulations (2005) which would give the unelected WHO greater control of national emergency healthcare decisions and new powers to push vaccine passports, global surveillance, and "global coordinated actions" that address "misinformation" whenever it declares a "health emergency."

From May 22 to May 28, representatives of the WHO's 194 member states (which represent 98% of all the countries in the world) will attend a World Health Assembly meeting in Geneva and vote on this treaty and the proposed amendments to the International Health Regulations (IHR). If passed, both the treaty and amendments to the IHR will be legally binding under international law.

The international pandemic treaty

The World Health Assembly (WHA), the decision-making body of the WHO, established an intergovernmental negotiating body (INB) to draft and negotiate a "global accord on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response" in December 2021. The WHA aims to have this treaty adopted under Article 19 of the WHO Constitution which gives the WHA the power to impose legally binding conventions or agreements on WHO member states if two-thirds of the WHA vote in favor of them.

While the WHO framed this as an international pandemic treaty, the latest draft of the treaty has since evolved to cover all "health emergencies." Unlike the term "pandemic," which is limited in scope and refers to the worldwide spread of infectious disease, the WHO's definition of a "public health emergency of international concern" (PHEIC) is much broader and applies to all types of disease, regardless of whether they're infectious:

> "A PHEIC is defined in the IHR (2005) as, 'an extraordinary event which is determined to constitute a public health risk to other States through the international spread of disease and to potentially require a coordinated international response.'"

The draft treaty places the "WHO at the centre" and solidifies the WHO as "the directing and coordinating authority on international health" and gives it sweeping, legally binding powers to force member states to adopt many of the censorship and surveillance tools that were imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Some of the key areas of the draft treaty include:

International vaccine passports and contact tracing: Member states will be required to "support the development of standards for producing a digital version of the International Certificate of Vaccination and Prophylaxis" (the WHO's official vaccine passport). The WHO will also "develop norms and standards" for "digital technology applications relevant to international travel" such as contact tracing apps and digital health forms.

Global surveillance: The WHO will conduct "coordinated global surveillance of public health threats" and member states will be required to build out their surveillance systems and work with "the WHO's global systems for surveillance." Non-state actors (which could include Big Tech companies) will also be required to work with governments, the WHO, and other international partners to leverage their "considerable data" to "create the strongest possible early warning and response systems."

Addressing "misinformation," "disinformation," and "too much information:" The draft treaty pushes "national and global coordinated actions to address the misinformation, disinformation, and stigmatization, that undermine public health." Member states will also be required to strengthen their approaches to "infodemic management" (a term coined by the WHO that refers to "too much information including false or misleading information in digital and physical environments during a disease outbreak.") Additionally, non-state actors will be required to actors to work with governments to fight disinformation.

Funding: WHO members are set to collectively pay the WHO over $950 million in dues for 2022-2023 and already paid over $270 million in voluntary contributions for 2020-2021. And this draft treaty proposes that G7 countries (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK, and the US) also pay $11 billion for the "Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A)." Additionally, it intends to create an"International Pandemic Financing Facility" that will extract long-term (10-15 year) contributions of $5-10 billion per year.

We obtained a copy of the draft treaty for you here.

If this draft treaty is approved at the May 22 to May 28 WHA meeting, the INB will hold a second meeting on August 1 to discuss progress on the draft. A progress report will then be delivered at the 76th WHA meeting in May 2023. The final treaty will then be presented for adoption at the 77th WHA meeting in May 2024.

Proposed amendments to the International Health Regulations (2005)

On January 18, the Biden administration quietly sent the WHO its extensive proposed amendments to the IHR. The details of these proposed amendments were only made public on April 12, almost three months after they were sent.

Under the current IHR, 196 countries are legally required under international law to build the capability to detect and report potential public health emergencies worldwide and respond promptly to a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) whenever it's declared by the WHO.

These proposed amendments from the Biden administration give the WHO and its Director-General, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, sweeping new powers to declare public health emergencies, even over the objection of member states, and implement global surveillance measures that require the mass collection of genetic sequence data.

Some of the key amendments that are being pushed by the Biden administration include:

Increased WHO powers to declare "potential" emergencies: Currently, the WHO can only declare a PHEIC when there's an actual "public health risk to other States through the international spread of disease." These proposed amendments allow it to declare a PHEIC when there's a "potential or actual" PHEIC. This means there doesn't have to be evidence of the international spread of disease, just the potential for it.

Increased WHO powers to declare health emergencies: Currently, the WHO has to follow the PHEIC criteria when declaring a public health emergency and health emergencies can only be declared by the Director-General. But under these proposed amendments, the WHO Director-General can issue an "intermediate public health alert" to any country in response to events that don't meet the criteria of a PHEIC and a WHO "regional director" can declare a "public health emergency of regional concern" (PHERC).

Global surveillance and data sharing: The Biden administration's proposed amendments empower the WHO to develop new "early warning criteria" for monitoring "national, regional, or global risk posed by an event of unknown causes or sources." Additionally, these proposed amendments expand the scope of data sharing under the IHR and require members to hand over genetic sequence data to the WHO whenever they have an event that "may constitute a public health emergency of international concern."

We obtained a copy of the proposed amendments to the IHR for you here.

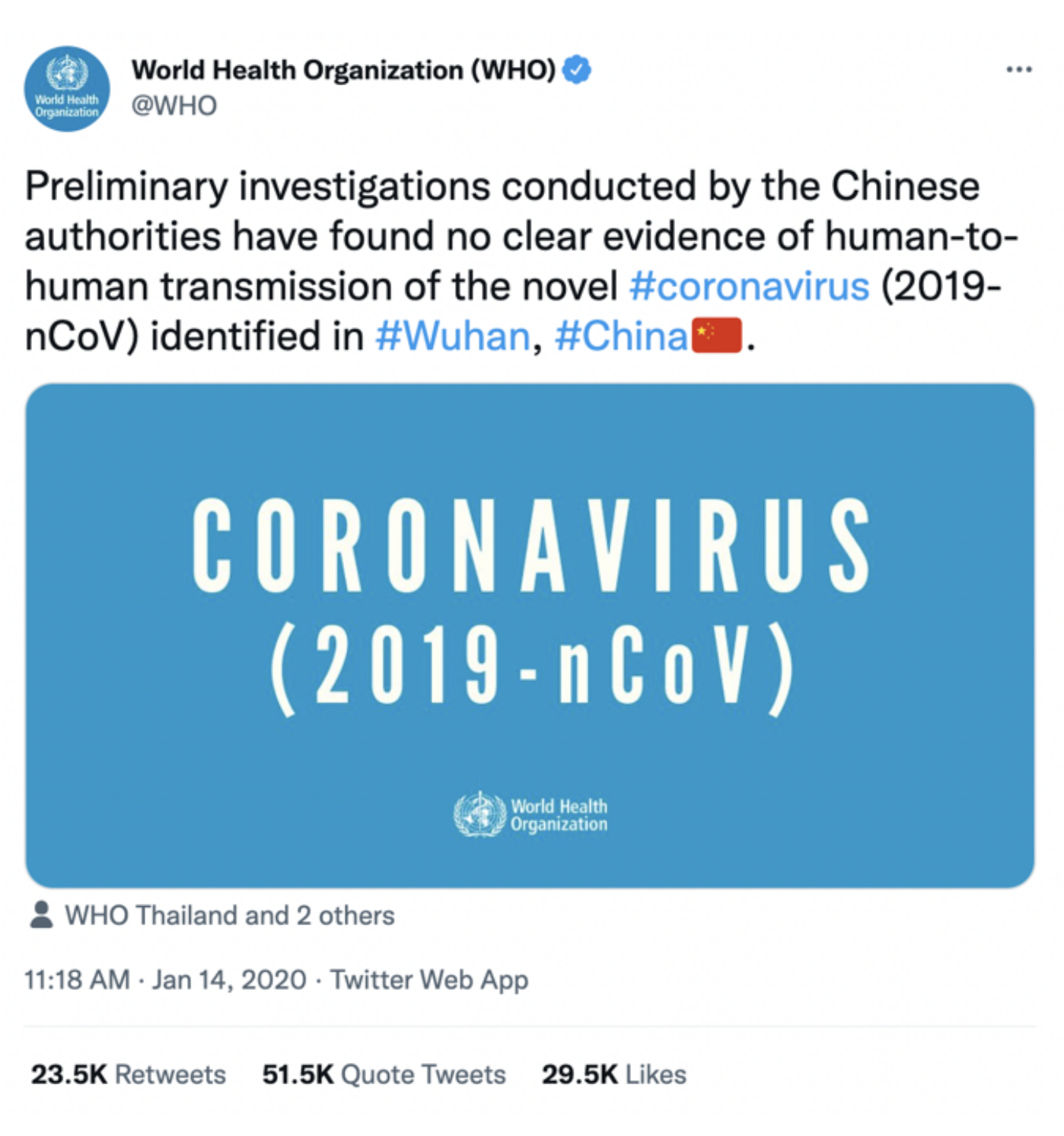
If these amendments are approved at the May 22 to May 28 WHA meeting, nations have six months to reject them. After six months, they'll enter into force and any rejection or reservation "shall have no effect."

The WHO's history of supporting surveillance and acting as an arbiter of truth

Not only could this treaty and the proposed amendments to the IHR empower the unelected WHO to push surveillance, vaccine passports, and global programs that target what it deems to be misinformation but this international health agency already gave the world a taste of how it exercises these powers during the COVID-19 pandemic. As COVID-19 spread, the WHO rigorously supported surveillance tech and was increasingly used as an arbiter of truth on Big Tech platforms, even though it got many things wrong.

YouTube, Facebook, Wikipedia, and others have partnered with the WHO to tackle misinformation or display labels with information from the WHO. YouTube even goes as far as removing videos that go against the WHO and has censored over 800,000 videos under this policy.

Despite having significant influence over how these platforms determine which posts to brand as misinformation, the WHO has got many things about COVID wrong and amplified misleading statements. For example, in an infamous January 14, 2020 tweet, the WHO stated that "preliminary investigations conducted by the Chinese authorities have found no clear evidence of human-to-human transmission" of the coronavirus.



World Health Organization (WHO) @WHO

Preliminary investigations conducted by the Chinese authorities have found no clear evidence of human-to-human transmission of the novel #coronavirus (2019-nCoV) identified in #Wuhan, #China🇨🇳.

WHO Thailand and 2 others

11:18 AM · Jan 14, 2020 · Twitter Web App

23.5K Retweets **51.5K** Quote Tweets **29.5K** Likes

The WHO has also praised China's response to COVID which relies heavily on digital censorship and surveillance. Only recently did the WHO break this trend and criticize China's zero-COVID policy. And when it did, these digital censorship systems were unsurprisingly used to censor the WHO's statements on Chinese social platforms.

Another thing that the WHO heavily supported throughout the COVID-19 pandemic was vaccine passports. It pushed for them in December 2020 and it's still pushing for the adoption of global vaccine passports this year.

The WHO's undemocratic global governance system

The way the WHO gains its powers gives citizens almost no recourse. Instead of the response to national emergencies in democratic nations being the sole purview of elected officials who can vote on proposed measures that apply to their citizens and be held accountable at the ballot box by those citizens, WHO members vote on legally binding international treaties and agreements on their behalf via the WHA. If two-thirds of the WHA vote to adopt a treaty or agreement, it becomes legally binding under international law.

This global governance system has the support of both parties in most democratic countries. For example, during the 2022 Australian federal election campaign, both of the leading candidates expressed full support for the WHO's expanded powers.

And the WHO Director-General has used the COVID-19 pandemic to push countries to further embrace the WHO's global governance system by blasting countries that made their own decisions and claiming that their "'me-first' approaches…stymie the global solidarity needed to deal with a global threat."

Related: How Big Government and Big Tech used COVID to accelerate the adoption of digital ID

Countries that support the WHO's expanded powers

Many countries have expressed support for the international pandemic treaty or the proposed amendments to the IHR.

The US supports both its proposed IHR amendments and the international pandemic treaty.

The treaty also has the support of the UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the European Council (EC) (which represents 27 European Union (EU) member states). According to the EC, 110 countries supported the decision to launch negotiations on the treaty. If these 110 countries vote in favor of the treaty, it would give the WHA close to the two-thirds of the majority it needs to pass the treaty.

Opposition to the WHO's expanded powers

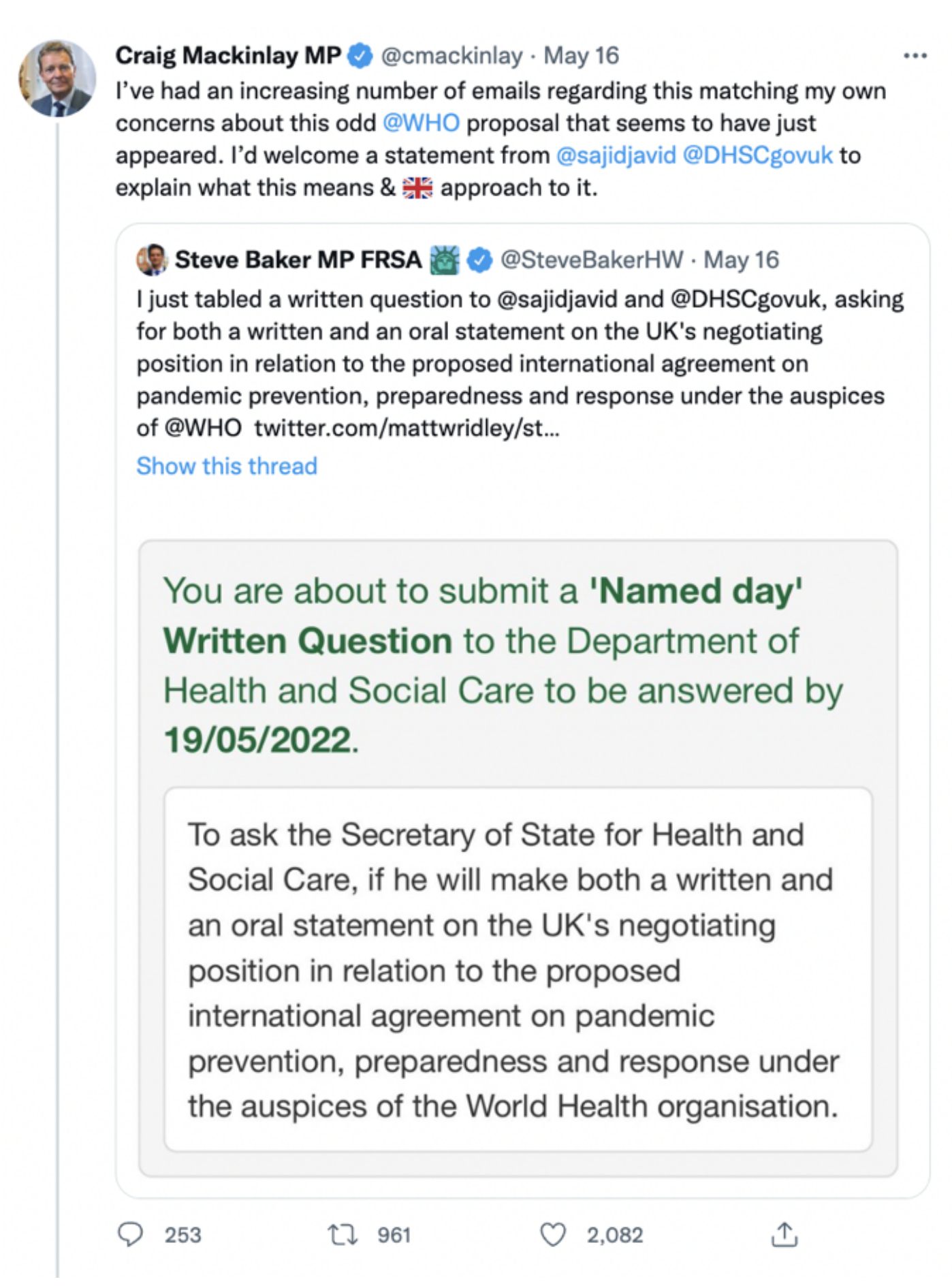
While there's significant member state support for these expanded WHO powers, local politicians, citizens, and rights groups are opposing this power grab.

In the US, Congresswoman Mary Miller (R-IL), Congressman Byron Donalds (R-FL), and Congressman Chris Smith (R-NJ), have opposed the Biden administration's proposed amendments to the IHR.

Senator Rick Scott (R-Fla.), and Senator Tom Cotton (R-Ark.) have also opposed the Biden administration's support of the international pandemic treaty.

In Australia, Senator Malcolm Roberts (One Nation), Senator Alex Antic (Liberal Party), and Senator Gerard Rennick have opposed the international pandemic treaty.

Several UK Members of Parliament (MPs), including the Conservative MPs Craig Mackinlay and Steve Baker, have also called for the government to provide clarity on the treaty.



Craig Mackinlay MP @cmackinlay · May 16

I've had an increasing number of emails regarding this matching my own concerns about this odd @WHO proposal that seems to have just appeared. I'd welcome a statement from @sajidjavid @DHSCgovuk to explain what this means & 🇬🇧 approach to it.

Steve Baker MP FRSA @SteveBakerHW · May 16

I just tabled a written question to @sajidjavid and @DHSCgovuk, asking for both a written and an oral statement on the UK's negotiating position in relation to the proposed international agreement on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response under the auspices of @WHO twitter.com/mattwridley/st…

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You are about to submit a **'Named day' Written Question** to the Department of Health and Social Care to be answered by **19/05/2022**.

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make both a written and an oral statement on the UK's negotiating position in relation to the proposed international agreement on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response under the auspices of the World Health organisation.

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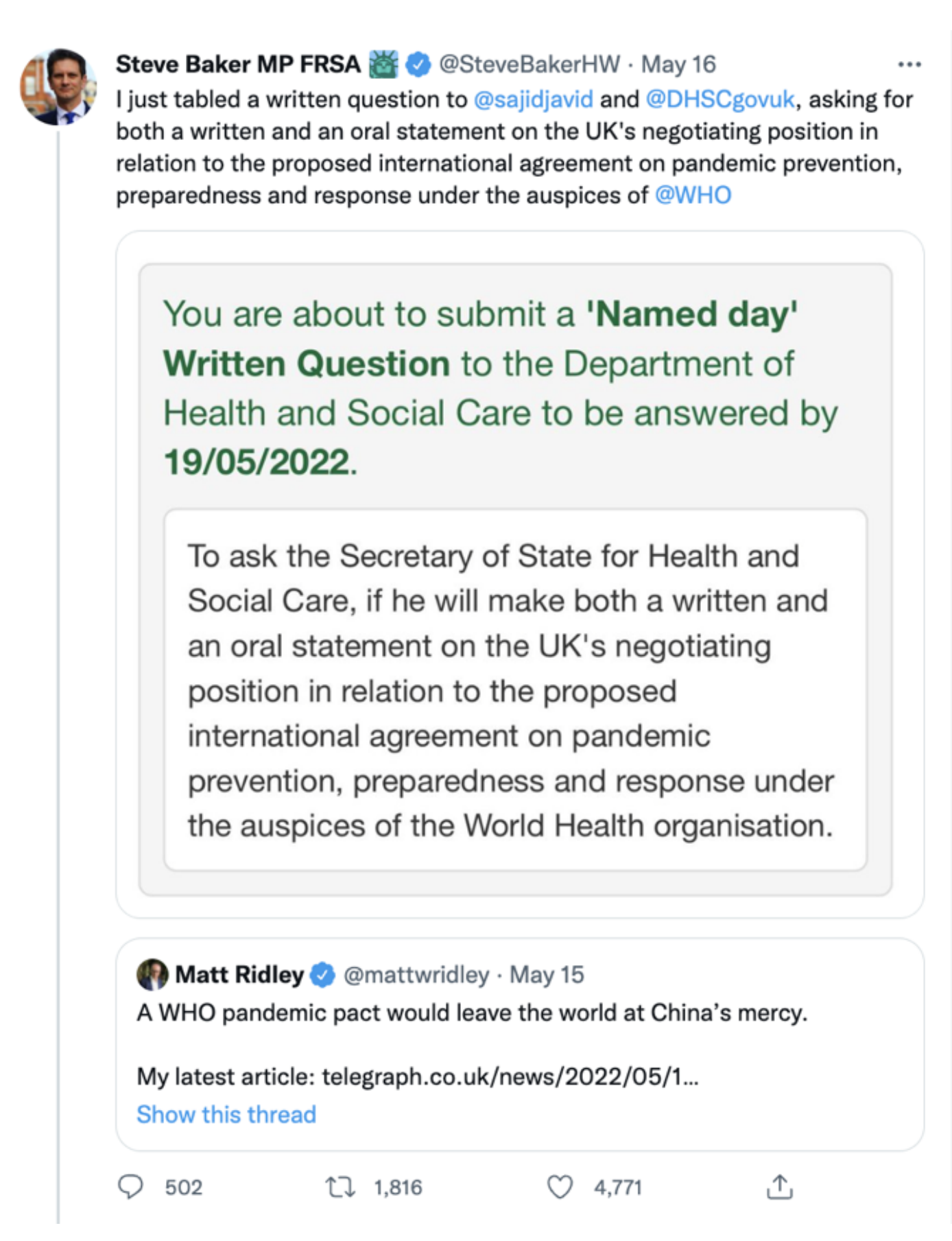

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Matt Ridley @mattwridley · May 15

A WHO pandemic pact would leave the world at China's mercy.

My latest article: telegraph.co.uk/news/2022/05/1…

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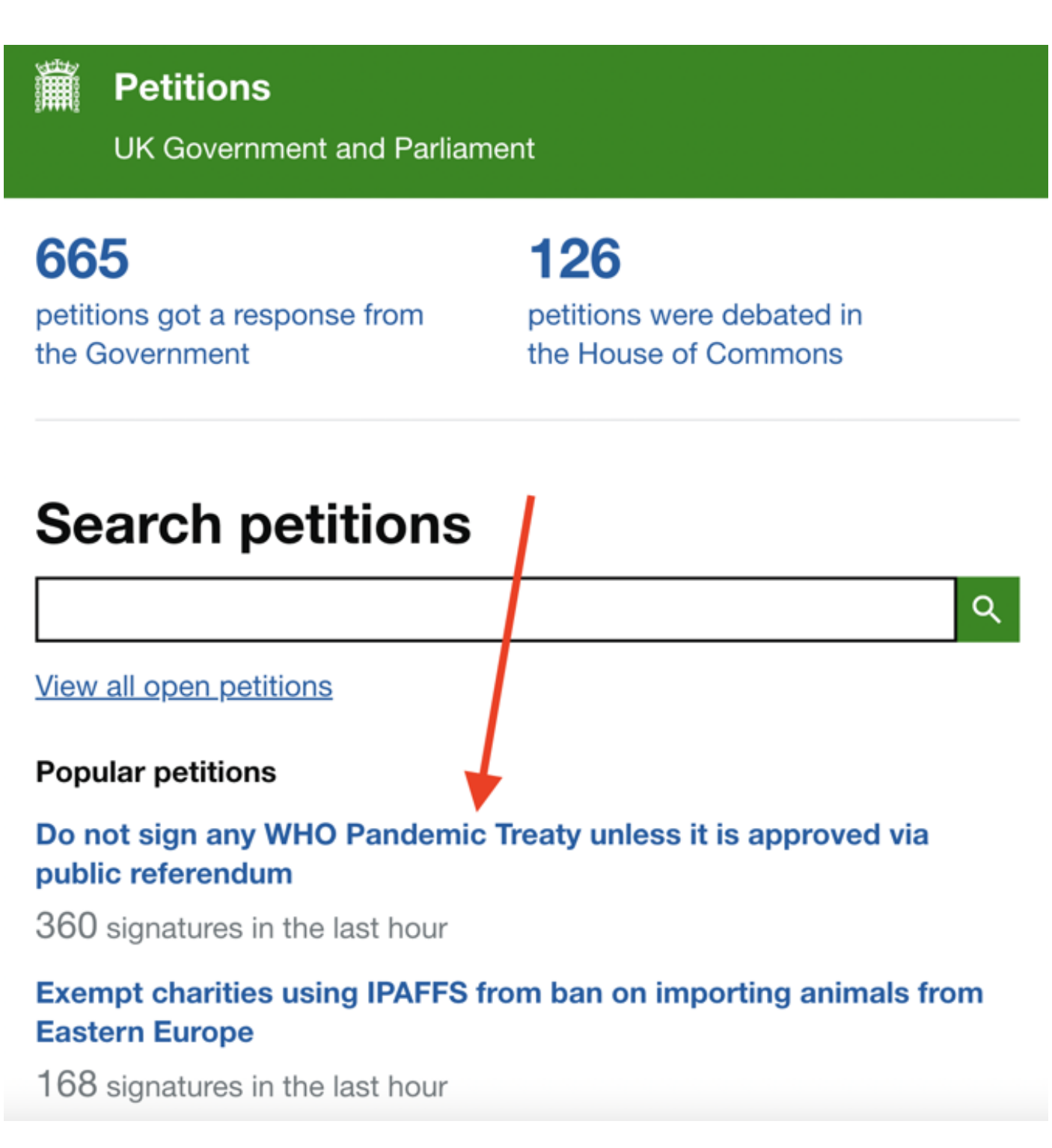
UK Health Secretary Sajid Javid responded to Baker's calls by stating that the UK government supports the treaty but "would not sign up to any instrument that compromises the UK's sovereignty," including "any instrument which compromises the UK's ability to take domestic decisions on national restrictions or other measures."

A UK Government and Parliament petition urging the government to not sign any WHO pandemic treaty unless it's approved via public referendum has received over 130,000 signatures which means Parliament will now consider it for a debate. The petition has also trended on the homepage of the UK Government and Parliament petition's website.



Petitions

UK Government and Parliament

665 petitions got a response from the Government

126 petitions were debated in the House of Commons

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Do not sign any WHO Pandemic Treaty unless it is approved via public referendum

360 signatures in the last hour

Exempt charities using IPAFFS from ban on importing animals from Eastern Europe

168 signatures in the last hour

Member of the European Parliament (MEP) Christine Anderson has opposed the treaty, branding it an "abolition of democracy by the global elites."

Conservative Party of Canada (CPC) MP Leslyn Lewis has also pushed back against the treaty and launched a "Stop The Treaty" petition which calls for Canada to decline the treaty.

And rights group World Council for Health has launched a #StopTheWho Campaign which opposes both the treaty and proposed IHR amendments.

But for now, the fate of this WHO power grab rests on the outcome of the May 22 to May 28 WHA meeting.

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MargaretAnna 4 hours ago

Thank you for covering this imminent threat to national sovereignty. I published my public comment on the IHR amendments here:

- Letter to the US HHS Office of Global Affairs (https://margaretannaalice.substack.com/p/letter-to-the-us-hhs-office-of-global?s=w)

I provide a list of action steps people can take after letter. I am regularly adding new opportunities as they arise, so check back for updates and subscribe to my Substack (https://margaretannaalice.substack.com) if you want to stay apprised of my #StopTheAmendments, #StopTheTreaty, and #StopTheWHO efforts in collaboration with World Council for Health, Health Freedom Defense Fund, and other organizations fighting the WHO.

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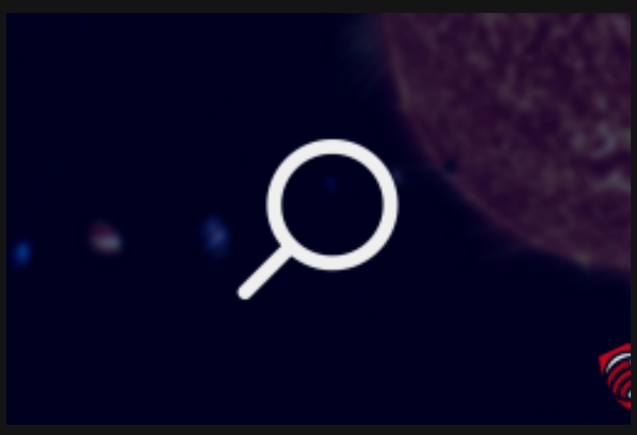

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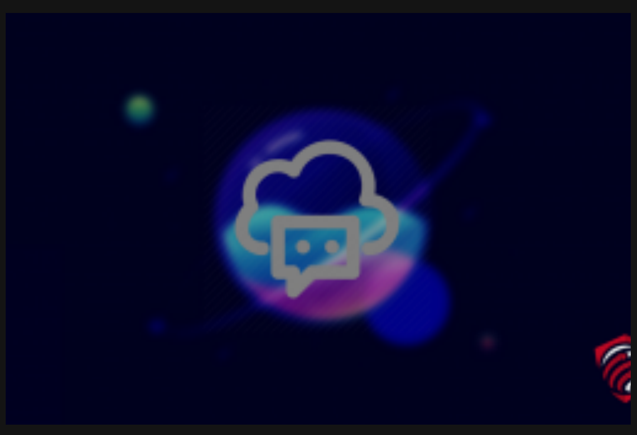

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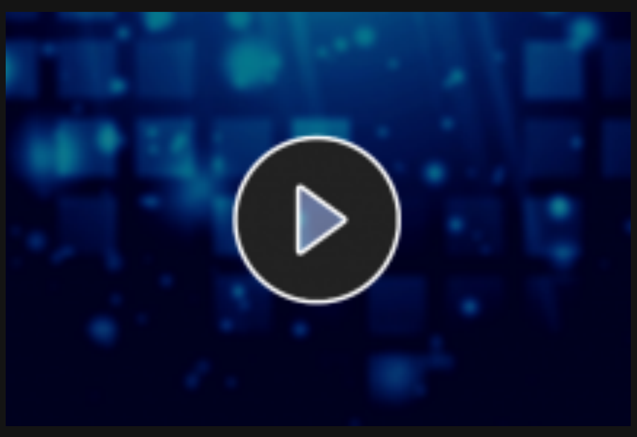

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